

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

ENGLISH NATION

Tuesday, August 6. 1706.

TH O' this Paper is a Digression from Story, yet I hope, the Usefulness of the Subject will make Satisfaction for it, without any more Apology.

MISCELLANEA.

IT is some Time since, I took the Liberty to make Observations upon the partial Proceedings of some Gentlemen call'd Commissioners, on the Occasion of Taxing the Dissenting Clergy in *England* in the Land Tax; in which 'tis plain, they are not chargeable by the true Intent and Meaning of the Law.

I wave the Objections rais'd in Print against what I publish'd on that Head, and

the unjust Reflections made on the Story I related for an Example, as if it was false in Fact, and forg'd by me to set off my Argument. I forbear entering into the ill Treatment I receiv'd on that Head, in meer Respect to the unhappy Circumstances of the Author of that Paper, who is now under publick Trouble; and however he has singled me out to be rough with, I shall not add to his Load, but requite him with

with wishing him well out of the Hands of that Power, which had he consider'd, how unable he is to struggle with, and how much he is in the wrong, he would have more carefully avoided.

But I publish the following Letter, as well for the particular vouching what I have said, or shall say on that Subject; as for the Direction of several other Dissenting Ministers, who have sent me their Cases, and desir'd to be inform'd, what has been done, they being most injuriously treated upon the same Subject——Who, if they please to fly to the Protection of the Law with the same Conduct and Resolution as this Gentleman, may no doubt have the same Success, and be for the future as quiet and unmolested as he

This Letter is under the Gentleman's own Hand, the Case is the same I published before, and which I am charg'd with forging; and the Original is left with Mr. Matthews, for any body that pleases to peruse it.

Sweiland near Saxmundham in Suffolk,

May 25. 1706.

S I R,

LAST Year I was Assess'd 7 l. for my Stipend or Salary, the Matter began thus, our Assessors carry'd in three Duplicates, when order'd, with the full Sum for Money requir'd of the Town, without Assessing me for my Stipend; one of the Commissioners asked the Assessors, why they did not put me in, they answered, that it was Councillor Neal's Advice to me, that I was not liable by Law to pay. But this one Commissioner answer'd, and told one of the Assessors, that he should go home and make a new Duplicate, and put me in 7 l. for my Stipend; one of the Assessors comes to me, and tells me what he was order'd to do; I told him, he could not do it, for there was not any thing in the Act that did make me liable to be Assess'd. He said, he must do it; and that his Landlord would make it cost him 40 l. if he did not, his Landlord being one of the Commissioners. I told him, his Landlord could not force him; that Commissioners

were to execute Laws, not to make Laws, and that it was the Judgment of several Councillors, that I was not liable to be Assess'd; for I made Application to several of the soberest and ablest Councillors in these parts, and they all told me, that the Act of Parliament made me no where chargeable with it; and therefore I told him, I was not willing to pay, and that if I were injoy'd to pay by Act of Parliament, I would pay it upon the first Demand, they should not to ask me for it twice: But however, they would Assess me, and did; and when they had done it, I told the Assessors, the Queen should not be cheated; for if I must pay by Law or no Law, the Queen should have my Money levied upon me intire by it self; for (mark it) the matter was thus, the Queen would not have had one penny the more, for the Money being tax'd upon me——For they would make me help to pay their Land Tax; one of the Commissioners had Land lay in the Town, and said, I should help pay his Land Tax; and one of the Assessors boasted, and said, that I paid 20 s. a Year for him; for they eas'd themselves in the Land Tax in the whole Town, so far as my Money would go——So the Assessors carried in the second Duplicate; wherein they had assess'd me 7 l.; and now it was accepted, the Warrant sign'd, and the Collectors appointed to gather the Money: The Collectors then came and demanded the first Quarters Pay as I was assess'd, but I refus'd to pay it; they return'd without it, but saying they must distrain, I told them, they had the Liberty; but they did not at that time; upon which they were sharply chidden and threatened by one of the Commissioners, who told them, that if they would not strain me, they should pay the Money themselves: When the second quarterly Pay Day came, the Collectors came again, I told them, I would not pay, but would appeal to Justice, they said they must then distrain: I told them, they had their Liberty, so they made their Distress took what they pleas'd, carried away my Goods——The Commissioners Names, Esq; Bews, Henry Damant, Gent. and Mr. Sparbam,

• *Assessors Names William Taylor, Tho. Mullunney, The Collectors Names William Smith, John Atkins*—After I was thus distrained, I appeal'd to the Exchequer for Justice and Redress, according to the Advice of my Counsel; but before I did this, we proceeded as far in Civility towards them as we could. I first sent a Friend to the hottest of the Commissioners to desire him not to proceed so illegally against me, but he would not hear, but said it was in their Power to do what they pleas'd, and so the Matter became Arbitrary. My Lawyer also sent him a Letter with the greatest Mildness that need to be, and told him, there was not the least Colour nor Word in the Act for thus dealing with me; for he had searched the Act throughout, and desir'd him in all Love to desist, but the Commissioner would not, but expos'd his Letter with the greatest Shame and Disgrace; then I let them know, I was resolv'd to seek to Justice for defence of my self. So I enter'd an Action against them, *that is*, I by my Lawyer took a Writ out of the Exchequer, which was executed not by Way of Arrest. we were so civil to them, but by way of Notice by my Attorney, upon which they chose their Attorney Mr. Betts by Name, to put in an Appearance against me; but their Attorney did not think fit I suppose to appear, for he did not, and they went to their Councillor, but their Council told them, they were in the wrong, and that I was not liable to pay, and that they would be cast; so immediately there was Endeavours and Offers made by them for an Agreement. I enter'd my Actions only against two of the Commissioners, for the third was in the Parliament House a Member there, and against the two Collectors, but not against the Assessors, and it being a time when the Attornies were at London, some out of the Parliament House, I do not say who, made Application to one Mr. Darson an Attorney, to undertake their Business with my Lawyer and I for an Agreement; so Mr. Darson at last did undertake, through much urgency, for he had before told them, they could not Answer what they did, and as soon as he

• come down from London, he sent their desires to me together with Terms of Agreement on their side, which were that all Charges should be Paid by them, and my Money return'd to me again, for the Distress laid upon me, a Dinner for the said Treatment, and a Token for the Acknowledgment of their Error—At first I gave my Answer, that I would, nor could do nothing without my Counsellor came down from London; as soon as he was come down, I went to him, and gave him an Account of their desires as to my Affair, shewing my readiness of Submission to them, so we agreed to put a stop to the Business, till we see what they would do, and whether they were real in the desires they had signify'd as to an Agreement; upon this their Attorney was very diligent in his undertaking for them, and went to my Lawyer to seek for an Agreement; and afterwards sent one of my Friends to me, to intercede with me; so we appointed a Day to meet, when we submitted to their own desires and Terms, and put a stop to Matters in the Exchequer, not letting it proceed to a Trial; so that they had no room to blame us, for I am werr'd their own Desires, and Demands readily and willingly, which were these as above nam'd; they answer'd all Charges which were small; because we were merciful, Return'd me my Money, for the Goods they distrain'd and carried away from me, with a very little token as an Acknowledgment of their Abuse put upon me.

• This is in short the Sum of my Affair, and the Management of it, and now they do not venture me to pay the Town Land Tax for them any more; nor have they made the least Offer to Assess me this Year for my Salary, notwithstanding the Act is the same it was last.

Your Servant,

Samuel Wiltshire.

The Honesty and Plainness of the Style in this Letter, I hope, will offend no body, but rather convince any Man of the Genuine Native Sincerity of the Man; I make

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